

STAFFORD COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

Agenda Consideration

TOPIC: Proposed Amendment to
Regulation 6-10 – Emergency
Closing of Schools

ITEM NO: 10E

PREPARED BY: Andre' A. Nougaret 
Assistant Superintendent
for Support Services

MEETING: August 24, 2004
ACTION DATE: August 24, 2004

ACTION REQUESTED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT: That the Board receive for information amended Regulation 6-10, Emergency Closing of Schools.

KEY POINTS:

- Events of the past school year have prompted a comprehensive review of the Inclement Weather Assessment Process and the policy/regulation that guide the emergency closing of schools.
- A policy/requisition review committee was formed in May 2004, comprised of the following members:

*Maureen Cremmins, Teacher	*Greg Martin, Coord., Safety/Security
*Susan Norman, Teacher	*Karen Clore, President, SEA
*Barbara Johnston, Teacher	*Linda Powell, Bus Driver
*Elizabeth Staskiel, Parent	*Larry Himes, Dir., Pupil Transportation
*Mary Grace McGraw, Principal	*Craig Greenlaw, Dir., Central Garage
*Cindy Holder, Principal	*Lisa Boatwright, Asst. Dir. of Human Resources
*Ann Lewis, Principal	*Bonnie Martin, Secretary
*Valerie Cottongim, Coord. of Public Information	*Andre' Nougaret, Asst. Supt. for Support Services
- The committee convened on four occasions to develop a draft amended Regulation 6-10, Emergency Closing of Schools.
- Draft amended Regulation 6-10, Emergency Closing of Schools, shared with the School Board at Summer Retreat, August 6, 2004.
- Draft amended Regulation 6-10, Emergency Closing of Schools, contains several revisions which are minor and more editorial in nature, while others are more substantive. More significant changes include:
 - Inclement Weather Assessment Overview
 - On delayed opening days all but designated staff report one hour late instead of regular time.
 - On Code II days all staff, unless designated, will report to work two hours late.
- An inclement weather brochure has been developed and will be updated annually and shared with staff and parents.

SCHOOL BOARD GOAL:

Goal 7: Provide school environments where teachers are safe to teach and students are safe to learn.

FUNDING SOURCE:

AUTHORIZATION REFERENCE:

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INSTRUCTION

Emergency Closing of School(s)

A. Generally General Information

1. Inclement weather or other conditions hazardous to the health and/or safety of students and/or employees may necessitate the closing of schools and/or work locations, delayed opening or early dismissal. These decisions are made only by the superintendent of schools or his/her designee.
2. On inclement weather days, which may necessitate the closing of schools and/or work locations, delayed openings or early dismissal, a weather operations center shall be operational. Weather operations staff working collaboratively with Road Assessment Teams, VDOT and the Stafford County Sheriff's Department shall determine an initial recommendation to open/close/delay the opening of school. The safe and efficient transport of students by school buses and the safety of students, staff, and drivers are primary considerations (See Exhibit B).
- 2- 3. Announcement of closing, delayed opening or early dismissal shall be conveyed to schools, work locations and the appropriate broadcast media as soon as the decision to alter schedules or close schools is made. ~~(See Exhibit A to this regulation for a list of radio/television stations to be notified.)~~ The superintendent or his/her designee shall notify the appropriate media, schools, and work locations.
- 9- Generally, decision times for emergency closings/delayed openings/early dismissals will be announced as soon as possible and no later than the following times. However, circumstances for a specific emergency situation may cause a decision at any time.

All Day Closing	6:00	<u>5:30</u>	a.m.
Two-Hour Late Opening	6:00	<u>5:30</u>	a.m.
One-Hour Early Closing	11:30		a.m.
Two-Hour Early Closing	10:30		a.m.
Three-Hour Early Closing	9:30		a.m.
Four-Hour Early Closing	9:00		a.m.

- 3-4. Principals are to publicize closing, delayed opening and early dismissal procedures to students, parents, staff and community. Principals shall encourage parents to make plans for child care in case of early dismissal and shall publicize the broadcast media stations where

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information will be announced in cases of an emergency
(Exhibit A).

B. Delayed Opening

1. Principals are to be aware that parents have the option of not sending their child to school during inclement weather on delayed opening days when, in the parent's judgment, conditions in their neighborhood are unsafe. In such cases, upon notification by the parent, the student will receive an excused absence but will be required to make up work missed.
6. 2. On delayed opening days, all administrative staff and all service personnel, with the exception of support services central staff to include: Central Garage, Pupil Transportation, and Maintenance and Operations, are to make every reasonable effort to arrive at work one hour late. ~~with the exception of bus drivers, bus monitors and instructional, clerical and library paraprofessionals, all of whom will report according to the delayed time) are to make every reasonable effort to arrive at their regular time.~~

C. Early Dismissal

4. 1. School principals are responsible for organizing and carrying out the early dismissal plan for their schools, utilizing all available staff, and insuring the safety of all involved. The superintendent or his/her designee shall make appropriate adjustments to the pupil transportation system and communicate necessary information to students, parents and employees by broadcast media and telephone.
7. 2. On emergency early dismissal days teachers, and other instructional staff and all other service personnel, ~~clerical and library paraprofessionals may be dismissed by the principal when all students have left the building. Administrators and all other service personnel~~ and all other central office support staff will remain on duty until specifically dismissed by the superintendent or his/her designee, or if conditions warrant, as evaluated by the principal and the superintendent's office is notified. In

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cases of ~~emergency~~ early dismissal, principals will provide for the completion of preparations for school the following day. Principals will also assure that school offices are manned until a time when all buses from the school will have completed their runs. In the event of ~~emergency~~ early dismissal, designated emergency personnel will remain at work. (Emergency personnel will have been designated beforehand as described in Exhibit B C).

- a. Duty for emergency personnel will be kept to the absolute minimum required to deal with the ~~emergency~~ situation and to prepare for the re-opening of schools ~~after the emergency passes~~ as soon as possible.
- ~~8-3~~. Effects of ~~emergency closings~~ early dismissal days on field trips, athletic trips and after-school activities are contained in Exhibit B A to this regulation.
- ~~10-4~~. Procedures for ~~emergency~~ the early dismissal of schools are as follows:
 - a. All principals and the Director of Pupil Transportation shall be notified ~~by telephone~~ by the superintendent or his/her designee of the designated dismissal time. Emergency contact, ~~in the event of telephone failures~~, may be made through the sheriff's department, state police, fire and rescue units, and division radio-equipped vehicles.
 - b. All buses proceed to their respective schools immediately and follow their regular routes.
 - c. If there are roads that are identified as difficult to travel during inclement weather, parents and students will be notified as early in the school year as possible to designate an alternate stop. Parents should meet their children at this stop.
 - d. All school bus drivers will be notified as follows:
 - (1) Radio Announcements will be made over by way of broadcast media ~~as listed in Exhibit A to this regulation~~.

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- ~~(2) In the event that a bus driver does not have access to a radio and is not home, he/she may be contacted by telephone only if he/she has given an alternate telephone number to the supervisor of bus routes where he/she could be (Example: Doctor's office.)~~
- (2) On days when the weather is threatening or a possible emergency condition is eminent, all bus drivers are expected to be on standby, to listen to a designated broadcast media radio station, and to be prepared for possible closing or early dismissal.
- (3) In case of early dismissal, buses will run in the usual established order unless otherwise specifically changed by the Director of Pupil Transportation. If changes are made, the Director of Pupil Transportation will communicate such changes to the bus driver and principal of the school(s) involved.

B.D. Hot Weather

1. For implementation of Policy 6-10, the following guidelines for halting outdoor physical education activities (including those school sponsored activities that occur during summer months) in excessively hot and humid weather will be used. This decision will be made by the superintendent or his/her designee based upon the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) Index of variables of the thermal environment: temperature, humidity, radiation and air circulation.
 - a. When the WBGT Index exceeds 80 degrees, all outdoor physical education activities shall be conducted with caution and under constant supervision.
 - b. When the WBGT Index exceeds 85 degrees, all physical education activities shall be halted outdoors and can continue in an air-conditioned school.
2. WBGT Index readings shall be secured from the Quantico Marine Base Internet access at

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www.instaweather.com/wrc via the NBC4, 4 Winds
Programs.

Approved by Division Superintendent: October 12, 1989
Revised by Division Superintendent: May 12, 1992
Revised by Division Superintendent: November 9, 1993
Revised by Division Superintendent: December 2, 1996
Revised by Division Superintendent: August 14, 2001
Revised by Division Superintendent: _____, 2004

SITUATION	DECISION TIME	MEDIA RELEASE	SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS
Code Zero All Day Closing (All Schools and Office Facilities Closed)	By 6:00 <u>5:30</u> A.M.	"All Stafford County Schools will be closed today." Employees will be on Code Zero	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All school activities, day and evening, are canceled. No buses will operate. <u>Students will not attend.</u> 2. Schools, school division offices, and all support offices are closed. No employees shall report to work. 3. All non-school activities, day and evening, are canceled including adult education, college classes, and recreational programs scheduled in school buildings <u>and on school grounds.</u>
Code I All Day Closing (All Schools and Offices Closed)	By 6:00 <u>5:30</u> A.M.	"All Stafford County Public Schools will be closed today." Employees will be on Code I.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All school activities, day and evening, are canceled. No buses will operate. <u>Students will not attend.</u> 2. Schools and school division offices are closed. 3. Certain administrators and emergency personnel, as designated by the Director of Operations and Maintenance in Exhibit A <u>C</u>, will report at specified times to perform emergency services. These emergency personnel and report times will have been identified beforehand and will be selected from the maintenance and custodial staff. 4. All non-school activities, day and evening, are canceled including adult education, college classes and recreational programs scheduled in school buildings <u>and on school grounds.</u>
Code II All Day Closing (All Schools Closed)	By 6:00 <u>5:30</u> A.M.	"All Stafford County Public Schools will be closed today." Employees will be on Code II. Liberal leave is in effect. Administrative offices will open at 10:00 a.m.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All school activities, day and evening, are canceled. No buses will operate. <u>Students will not attend.</u> 2. Teachers, nurses, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, school nutrition and other school level staff who work less than 220 days shall not report on those days which will be made up by students. However, on those days, which are not to be made up by students, these employees shall follow the guidelines established by their principal or supervisor to make up the time required to fulfill their contract. 3. (Eleven-month service personnel who do not report to work will arrange with their supervisor to make up their time to complete their 220-day contract.) 4. Support services central staff to include: Central Garage and Maintenance and Operations are to make reasonable effort to arrive on time. 5. All administrative staff and all other service personnel, regardless of contract length, will report to work <u>two hours late</u>. Annual leave or personal leave may be requested after the fact (liberal leave) by those unable to report. 6. School/central office custodial and maintenance staff shall arrive early to prepare for opening of administrative offices on a two-hour delay. 7. All non-school activities, day and evening, are canceled including adult education, college classes and recreational activities scheduled in school division buildings <u>and on school grounds.</u>
2 Hour Late Opening	By 6:00 <u>5:30</u> A.M.	"All Stafford County Public Schools will open two hours late. There will be no A.M. preschool classes. P.M. preschool will be delayed 1/2 hour and there will be no middle school foreign language program". <u>Inclement weather conditions will be reassessed at 7:15 A.M.</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students, teachers, nurses, paraprofessionals, and service personnel who work less than 220 days shall report two hours late. 2. <u>All administrative staff and all other service personnel will report On delayed opening days, all administrative staff and all service personnel, with the exception of support services central staff to include: Central Garage, Pupil Transportation and Maintenance and Operations are to make every reasonable effort to arrive at work one hour late.</u> at the regular time. 3. There will be no a.m. preschool classes and p.m. preschool classes will be delayed 1/2 hour. 4. Breakfast programs cancelled. 5. Lunch will be served. 6. Regular field trips during the day are canceled. An exception may be made for trips and contests scheduled for after school hours. Such exceptions MUST have the approval of the Assistant Superintendent for Support Services 7. Dismissal will be at regular times.

SITUATION	DECISION TIME	MEDIA RELEASE	SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS
Early Closing 1 Hour Early	By 11:30 A.M.	<p>"All Stafford County Public Schools will dismiss one hour early. All after school and evening activities are canceled."</p> <p>High School - 1:15 Middle School - 1:50 Elementary School - 2:30 A.M. Preschool - 12:00 no lunch P.M. Preschool - 2:30 with lunch</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All teachers, nurses, paraprofessionals (instructional, clerical), and service personnel who work less than 220 days <u>All teachers, other instructional staff and all service personnel</u> MAY be dismissed by the principal only after all students have safely departed school property. Administrative staff and all other service personnel will remain on regular hours unless specifically dismissed by announcement from the Superintendent's Office, <u>or if conditions warrant as evaluated by the principal</u>. This announcement will usually accompany the school-closing announcement. Principals may use their judgment as to when segments of their staff will be dismissed (i.e., the entire staff would not remain for a few children waiting). For communication purposes, school offices will be staffed until that school's buses complete their runs. 2. Certain administrators and service personnel, as designated by their supervisor, will remain to perform essential services. 3. Field trips and athletic trips canceled. No trips will depart after the closing announcement. 4. Lunch will be served. Alternate schedules will be instituted to complete lunch before dismissal. 5. All non-school activities, day and evening, are canceled including adult education, college classes, and recreational programs scheduled in school buildings <u>and on school grounds</u>.
Early Closing 2 Hours Early	By 10:30 A.M.	<p>"All Stafford County Public Schools will dismiss two hours early. A.M. preschool will dismiss at 11:00 A.M. and there will be no P.M. preschool. All after school and evening activities are canceled."</p> <p>High School - 12:15 Middle School - 12:50 Elementary School - 1:30 A.M. Preschool - 11:00 no lunch</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All teachers, nurses, paraprofessionals (instructional, clerical), and service personnel who work less than 220 days <u>All teachers, other instructional staff and all service personnel</u> MAY be dismissed by the principal only after all students have safely departed school property. Administrative staff and all other service personnel will remain on regular hours unless specifically dismissed by announcement from the Superintendent's Office, <u>or if conditions warrant as evaluated by the principal</u>. This announcement will usually accompany the school-closing announcement. Principals may use their judgment as to when segments of their staff will be dismissed (i.e., the entire staff would not remain for a few children waiting). For communication purposes, school offices will be staffed until that school's buses complete their runs. 2. Certain administrators and service personnel, as designated by their supervisor, will remain to perform essential services. 3. Field trips and athletic trips canceled. No trips will depart after the closing announcement. 4. Lunch will be served. Alternate schedules will be instituted to complete lunch before dismissal. 5. All non-school activities, day and evening, are canceled including adult education, college classes, and recreational programs scheduled in school buildings <u>and on school grounds</u>.

SITUATION	DECISION TIME	MEDIA RELEASE	SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS
Early Closing 3 Hours Early	By 9:30 A.M.	<p>"All Stafford County Public Schools will dismiss three hours early. A.M. preschool will dismiss at 10:30 A.M. and there will be no P.M. preschool. All after school and evening activities are canceled."</p> <p>High School - 11:15 Middle School - 11:50 Elementary School - 12:30 A.M. Preschool - 10:30 no lunch</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All teachers, nurses, paraprofessionals (instructional, clerical), and service personnel who work less than 220 days <u>All teachers, other instructional staff and service personnel</u> MAY be dismissed by the principal only after all students have safely departed school property. Administrative staff and all other service personnel will remain on regular hours unless specifically dismissed by announcement from the Superintendent's Office <u>or if conditions warrant as available by the principal and superintendent's office is notified</u>. This announcement will usually accompany the school closing announcement. Principals may use their judgment as to when segments of their staff will be dismissed (i.e., the entire staff would not remain for a few children waiting). For communication purposes, school offices will be staffed until that school's buses complete their runs. 2. Certain administrators and service personnel, as designated by their supervisor, will remain to perform essential services. 3. Field trips and athletic trips canceled. No trips will depart after the closing announcement. Recall efforts for field trips will be initiated. 4. Lunch will be served at middle and elementary schools on altered schedule. No lunch at high schools. 5. All evening activities, school and non-school, are canceled.
Early Closing 4 Hours Early	By 9:00 A.M.	<p>"All Stafford County Public Schools will dismiss four hours early. A.M. preschool will dismiss at 9:30 A.M. and there will be no P.M. preschool. All after school and evening activities are canceled."</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All teachers, nurses, paraprofessionals (instructional, clerical), and service personnel who work less than 220 days MAY be dismissed by the principal only after all students have safely departed school property. Administrative staff and all other service personnel will remain on regular hours unless specifically dismissed by announcement from the Superintendent's Office. This announcement will usually accompany the school closing announcement. Principals may use their judgment as to when segments of their staff will be dismissed (i.e., the entire staff would not remain for a few children waiting). For communication purposes, school offices will be staffed until that school's buses complete their runs. 2. Certain administrators and service personnel, as designated by their supervisor, will remain to perform essential services. 3. Field trips and athletic trips canceled. No trips will depart after the closing announcement. Recall efforts for field trips will be initiated. 4. No lunch will be served at high schools or middle schools. Lunch will be completed by 11:30 in elementary schools. 5. All evening activities, school and non-school, are canceled.

EXHIBIT B**Inclement Weather Assessment****TIME LINE****4:00 A.M.****Weather Operations Center Is Operational****Location:**

School Board Office

Staff:

Assistant Superintendent for Support Services

Coordinator of Security and Safety

Road Assessment Teams

Driver 1

Southeast Sector

Driver 2

Southwest Sector/Southern Central Sector

Driver 3

Northwest Sector/Northern Central Sector

Driver 4

Northeast Sector

Driver 5

Mid Eastern Sector

Weather Operations Center Staff

- ❖ Contact the Stafford County Sheriff's Dispatcher and VDOT to ascertain current road conditions and any particular areas posing concerns.
- ❖ Directs road assessment teams to particular areas posing concerns.
- ❖ Contact other school divisions to determine their current opening/closing/late status.
- ❖ Monitor television, radio and online weather forecasts.

4:00 A.M. - 5:00 A.M.**Road Assessment Teams**

- ❖ Check road conditions to include school driveways and parking lots in their respective areas and other locations as directed by Weather Operations Center Staff.
- ❖ Communicate with other team members to gather information pertaining to road conditions and potential problem areas.

5:00 A.M.

- ❖ Respond to the Weather Operations Center.

5:15 A.M.

- ❖ Weather Operations Center Staff and Road Assessment Team members formulate an initial recommendation to open/close/delay the opening of school.
- ❖ Assistant Superintendent notifies the Superintendent of initial recommendation.

5:30 A.M.

- ❖ Superintendent makes final decision to open/close/delay the opening of school.
- ❖ Television networks, radio stations are notified of decision.
- ❖ If the decision is made to delay the opening of school, the Road Assessment Teams will continue to check the road conditions.
- ❖ School closing or delayed opening information is placed on the School Board web site and the School Board Office voice mail system.
- ❖ The Weather Operations Center Staff will continue to monitor weather forecast information and ascertain from other school divisions their final decision for school opening.

7:15 A.M.

- ❖ Road Assessment Teams will respond to the Weather Operations Center to determine a final recommendation of maintaining the delayed opening or closing for the day.

Emergency Personnel

***Code I** - For inclement weather conditions (snow and ice), the following emergency personnel will be responsible for cleaning the parking lots and sidewalks so that the administration and support services staff will have access to schools and/or office facilities.

~~Twenty (20)~~ **All** maintenance personnel presently assigned to the middle and high schools.

~~Twelve (12)~~ **Designated** maintenance personnel (excluding custodians) presently assigned to the Operations and Maintenance Department

Designated technicians presently assigned to the Central Garage

~~Six (6) custodians to be selected by the Director of Operations and Maintenance~~

****Code II** - All Maintenance personnel and custodians will be responsible for preparing all sites for the reopening of schools.